

Carter-Brezhnev Meeting Likely To Wrap Up SALT

The "corner" that a new SALT agreement had been just around for several months was finally reached last week. Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance and Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin cleared most obstacles to completion of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, including the question of modifying existing missiles, and then turned to the details of a wind-up session between President Carter and Leonid I. Brezhnev.

Negotiators were expected to announce this week that the heads of state will meet next month — possibly in Geneva, to spare the ailing Mr. Brezhnev the long trip to the United States. By then, officials said, the only unsettled item should be whether Moscow may encode missile test data and thus complicate American monitoring. While this is significant, the Soviet side has said a Carter-Brezhnev meeting could not be held unless agreement was certain. The hard part is to sell the treaty to the Senate. In that connection there were these developments:

- **Verification.** In the wake of C.I.A. Director Stansfield Turner's reported testimony that it would take five years

to make up for the loss of listening posts in Iran, the Administration and Senator Jake Garn, Republican of Utah, accused each other of misleading the public on United States ability to verify Soviet compliance with treaty terms. A twist: Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping told visiting senators that the United States could put SALT monitoring stations in China — if the Chinese manned them. State Department officials were cautious about such a venture because it would certainly infuriate the Russians.

- **Presidential assurances.** In a letter to three liberal Senators, Mr. Carter promised he would not propose new arms programs to persuade hard-liners to ratify the treaty. The decision whether to produce the MX, a new mobile missile system, "must be made outside the context of SALT," he said.

- **Timing.** While Senate leaders warned anew that there probably would not be time to debate and vote upon the treaty this year, White House analysts leaned to the view that the delay might help President Carter in his re-election campaign.

The Kremlin also played salesman last week, with more than SALT in mind. Mr. Brezhnev himself granted early release from prison for five Soviet Jews held since 1970 in a hijack-escape attempt, and gave eight Jewish families permission to emigrate. A Congressional delegation, including Ohio Democrat Charles A. Vanik, of the Jackson-Vanick amendment linking trade credits to emigration policies, is in Moscow.